

WENDT ~ ENG 201

FINAL EXAM

This exam will be an opportunity for you to take one last stab at argument—only this time you will be writing about yourself and English 201. I would like you to write this in letter format and tone, and the letter should be addressed directly to me. (Dr. Wendt). It should thus be formatted like a letter, you should consider me personally as your audience, and your tone should reflect a familiar yet scholarly tone.

YOUR CONTENT

The content of this letter is this course: research, writing, the power of language, the content from your research—anything and everything that has to do with this course. I would like you to choose five main things to talk about—one from each part of the rubric (Content, Purpose, Organization, Support, and Form). You will do this by working your way through this semester and talking about yourself as a researcher, as a writer, and what you learned about the power of language and writing as you went along. Try to be organized. You can organize by unit, by parts of the rubric, by the goals on the syllabus—any way of organizing is fine, but do not just ramble.

Be sure to make this personal. It should be about YOUR journey and what you learned along the way. You should refer to AND QUOTE FROM your own papers and my notes and comments, the rubric, the handouts, the syllabus—various materials from class—as support. You should also discuss what you failed to learn—or failed to implement. So let's say you know the importance of getting the reader's attention but have trouble doing it. That is part of your story. Talk about those things, too, not just everything that went well.

YOUR PURPOSE

You need to have an overall purpose to your exam, so be sure you have one main point. It should be something broad enough that all your discussion can revolve around it. But remember that you need to not just have a WHAT but also a SO WHAT. But please avoid the “I worked hard so I should get a good grade” argument. You will be graded according to the rubrics.

The key to a successful exam is to EXPLAIN WHY what you have learned is important—so for example, let's say you're talking about how good you've gotten at topic sentences, then you would want to discuss why topic sentences are important. Or maybe through your research you became aware of how powerful a specific word is, then you would want to talk about how this has made a difference to you. Make sure your paper covers both. *Don't just tell me you learned something. Tell my why it's important that you learned these things to show me that you really do understand it and are thinking well.*

All your papers are on Bb, so you can access every draft there. All the handouts are on the wiki, so you can access them all there. You should quote from your own papers and from my comments as well. When you do, make sure I can tell what and whom you are

quoting (so your in-text citations should have either your name or mine and a paper number i.e. Wendt Unit 4). So yes, you need in-text citations. You also should quote from your research sources—not a lot, but pick a few quotes that help you demonstrate what you’ve learned. Then, of course, you need a Works Cited/References page. You do NOT need to include your papers on the Works Cited page, only the outside sources you quote from. Remember, essentially you are making your final argument in the course. Be a show-off.

Please keep a few things in mind:

1. Be honest. It will never serve you well to pretend you are better (or worse!) than you are. I have read everything you’ve written. I’ve watched you in class. I am very well aware of how hard you’ve worked. I am looking for evidence that you clearly know your own weaknesses and know what you need to work on rather than avoiding them. Also showing an awareness of your weaknesses actually demonstrates understanding.
2. Please be courteous of others. While some issues you may have had over the course of the semester may have been exacerbated by others in the class—including me as the teacher—I am never sympathetic of someone who tries to blame all their problems on others. Take responsibility for your own actions, weaknesses, and flaws. I already know what they are. You won’t shock me by saying you screwed something up, and you won’t win me over by blaming all your problems on peers or on me. It is alright to discuss certain problems you had with me, my teaching methods, some of the assignments, or others in the class, but please don’t use these things as your only points of argument.
3. While this is an informal letter and you may argue for any point you want to make, you may NOT argue for a particular grade. I will grade you as the syllabus states: on your papers, your drafts, your exams, your homework, and your participation. Some have argued that they should pass because of how hard they have tried, but it is not possible to grade you on effort. Some students’ effort is visible and obvious, but I have no way of knowing about those students whose effort is less obvious. I have no objective way of determining how hard EVERYONE tries, and if I grade one person on effort, I have to grade everyone on effort. I use rubrics to grade as objectively as possible, and *effort* is not an objective criteria. Some just have to work harder than others. That’s life. Get used to it!
4. I’m looking for about 4 pages of writing (double-spaced, of course) MINIMUM. I expect you to support what you say and find good quotes from your writing to show me that you’re right so that I don’t have to rely on my memory of every paper you’ve written.

SO, IN A NUTSHELL:

- Discuss the semester, your papers, the five criteria, and/or the power of language
- Write it as a letter to me
- Quote from your papers and a few select sources

- Explain why these things are important
- Be a show-off with your awesome skills
- Make a Works Cited page of the outside sources you use
- And have an awesome summer and a wonderful life. Never forget the power of your words—and use them to make this world a better place. ☺

-	0	1	2	3	4
Think critically about yourself, words, writing, and why it matters					
Have a point and stick to it					
Give examples from your papers and class and sources					
Have solid paragraphs, intro, conclusion					
Be a show-off with your awesome skills					
Totals					
Grade out of 75					
COMMENTS:	<p>Be the best version of you.</p> 				